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ABSTRACT

Four adult education programs serving homeless persons in Wisconsin were evaluated. Data were gathered through site visits, a review of program documents, and a survey of 43 homeless individuals served by the programs (7 percent of the total population served). Participants expressed very positive feelings about the programs. Many reported that their basic skill levels had improved and that they felt more optimistic and better about themselves. The number of persons who returned to classes or enrolled in other educational activities since leaving the homeless programs was very high. Interviews with program and shelter staff showed a high degree of cooperation in three of the sites and indicated that, although the fourth site was experiencing difficulty, personnel changes were expected to improve the situation. Barriers to program implementation included personal characteristics of participants and inherent problems in the programs, such as lack of facilities. The homeless education programs did not compete with other literacy programs, since they served persons out of the mainstream. As a result of the evaluation, recommendations for program improvement involving leadership were made to the State Department of Education and recommendations for program operation were made to local program staff. (Site visit interview forms and participant surveys are appended.) (KC)

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WISCONSIN ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS

PROGRAM EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

December 31, 1990

Submitted to:

**THE WISCONSIN BOARD OF VOCATIONAL, TECHNICAL
AND ADULT EDUCATION**

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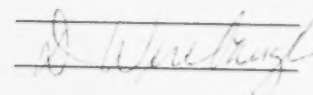
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WISCONSIN ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wisconsin citizens who are receiving literacy training and other educational services through this project expressed a very positive feeling about their participation and the services they are receiving. All respondents to the survey administered as part of the evaluation process stated that they feel better about themselves and more hopeful about the future than they did before they entered the program. Many reported that their basic skill level has improved and that they are learning about educational opportunities and services which are available to them. Significantly, the number of participants who return to classes or who have enrolled in other educational activities after leaving the shelter is very high in the programs which have been operating long enough to accumulate this data.

Based on the sample provided by the completed survey forms, 58% of the participants are male, 42% are female; 81% are between 20 and 40 years of age; and 58% have children. (This figure may not represent the actual distribution of children in the total homeless population. It may be a reflection of the difference in the way family shelters operate. It is easier to access parents because their living situation is somewhat more normal than the single persons'.)

In short, the results of the survey and interviews with program participants indicate that, in addition to gaining basic academic skills and showing increased self-esteem, they are motivated to look for jobs and housing, and want to continue in an educational process. Efforts have been made to find some alternatives for young mothers struggling with child care, but none have been totally successful. The program is doing an excellent job of informing clients about further educational opportunities and serving as a liaison to the institutional setting.

Interviews with program and shelter staff revealed a high degree of cooperation in three of the sites. The fourth was experiencing difficulties, but personnel changes were being made at the time of the first on-site visit and on the second, many of the problems had been or were in the process of being rectified.

Enrollment figures show excellent progress in meeting the project goals. Enrollments in basic skills classes at the time of the evaluation visits were 613, and when all persons receiving other services are included the number served is 1,214.

The barriers to program implementation which were identified include personal characteristics of the participants and inherent problems within the structure of the program. Many of the classes operate in woefully inadequate facilities; child care is

seldom available; part-time jobs, job and apartment hunting as well as all other adult responsibilities frequently interfere with attendance; shelter problems cause conflicts with classes; the curriculum has been largely adopted from other programs and there has sometimes not been enough direct supervision of the instructional activities by the technical institute.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Providing adult education for the homeless in shelters is a new program concept. Most of the effort has concentrated on developing program proposals, implementation plans and curriculum, purchasing materials and equipment, and hiring staff. Wisconsin, however, has been able to establish programming which shows positive trends through the following activities:

- provided a forum for shelter operators, community leaders and educators to discuss the educational needs of the homeless and to develop strategies to meet these needs;
- improved the reported self-esteem of the participants;
- encouraged participants to consider enrolling in school or a job training program as a viable life option; and
- improved the self-reported literacy skills of homeless adults.

The homeless adult literacy program neither replaces nor competes with established programs. It has reached adults out of the mainstream and brought them into an educational program. As the program continues to serve the homeless, it is reasonable to expect that all will be as successful as the first in establishing the linkages to existing programs that will enable the participants to continue to build their basic academic skills, job and living skills, and self-esteem.

Each shelter is unique, with programming designed to meet the needs of its target population: single men and/or women, families with children, single mothers and children, or non-English speaking adults/families. There is, therefore, no homogeneous group of shelters or homogeneous homeless population for whom "A Program" can be developed.

Each educational program must adapt its curriculum and instruction to the needs of the population served by each shelter.

The original proposals, lacking an experience base with the homeless, drew heavily on the Adult Education models. Much of what was developed is in place and working effectively. New proposals, however, should develop goals and objectives which more clearly reflect the reality of the homeless program.

On the basis of this evaluation and these conclusions, the following recommendations are offered to the State Department:

- The four funded programs in Wisconsin show evidence of careful planning in the development and implementation stages. They are making good progress in meeting their objectives, and mechanisms are in place to address problems which arise. The state department needs to continue to provide leadership in the following areas:
 - Provide leadership in curriculum development, including living skills and motivational/self-esteem building.
 - Provide leadership in staff development and in-service.
 - Provide a vehicle for sharing information among the program providers.
 - Provide local programs with uniform data collection and report forms, and instruct local staff in their use.
 - Require and facilitate the active participation of the project managers of the technical college.
 - Require WBVTAE Basic Education certification for all instructors, and fund programs at the level which permits local managers to use these instructional hours as part of the work load of experienced teachers.

The following recommendations are proposed for local staff:

- Continue to work with shelter administrators to promote awareness of the program and recruit students into the program. Given the highly mobile state of this population, this activity must always remain a priority effort.
- Continue efforts to inform participants about other educational programs and services, and make referrals for service when appropriate.

- Provide instructional materials which use living skill content while developing basic skills.
- Continue to rely on shelter staff to screen the population in the shelter, and refer only those most likely to benefit from the program.
- Provide paraprofessional assistance with tutoring, record keeping and data collection.
- Provide a forum for the community to discuss how child care services can be provided to program participants. Child care providers, social services, the local state employment office, shelter staff, the technical college staff, volunteer groups and any other interested persons should be included.
- Integrate program staff as much as possible into the existing adult education staff so that their expertise and experience are available to assist them.

WISCONSIN ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS

FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Wesselius Associates was contracted by the Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education (WBVTAE) to conduct an evaluation of the four adult education for the homeless programs which it has funded through local technical colleges in the state. This evaluation was designed to look at three critical areas:

- The extent to which program objectives are being met;
- The successes and failures; and
- The changes and improvements which should be made.

The United States Congress, in an effort to address the increasing problem of homelessness in America, in 1987 passed the Stuart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77), later amended by P.L. 100-297. Among the variety of assistance efforts for the homeless, two key elements focused on educational efforts for homeless adults:

- Section 701 of the Act amended current legislation to specify that homeless adults are eligible for adult education services under the Adult Education Act.
- Section 702 of the Act created a program of statewide literacy initiatives to provide federal assistance to enable state education agencies to develop and implement programs for literacy training and basic skills remediation for homeless adults.

The Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education developed a state plan that included a definition of homelessness based on the categorization developed by the Volunteers of America of Greater New York:

- "Situational Homelessness" describes people who are getting by and even doing well until one unexpected blow levels them...usually they can get back on their feet with a little help and direction.
- "Marginal Homelessness" involves individuals who drift in and out of homelessness repeatedly..with the right kind of sustained, comprehensive help, this group can also return to mainstream society.

- "Chronic Homelessness", the third category, is not referred to in the State Plan.

Using a Request For Proposal process, four contracts were awarded in 1989 and 1990 to technical colleges in areas of the state where homelessness had been documented, and where shelter providers were willing to enter into a cooperative effort. The number of individuals projected to be served and the budget were derived by the local applicants based on estimates of the number of adults in the target population.

All programs are heavily grounded in the Basic Skills Education curricula used in the technical colleges. All provide at least some counseling and support service, have a high level of shelter staff interest, involvement and commitment, and share many of the same problems. Differences in the local programs are largely the result of two factors:

The goals and purpose of the shelter

Some shelters provide twelve-hour service, typically 8:00 pm to 8:00 am. Others, usually family shelters, provide all day service.

Shelters have different philosophies about serving the homeless, which directly affect program operation. Some operate strictly as an emergency service, others use a more holistic, nurturing approach.

The nature of the population which the shelter serves

Shelters may serve only single males, singles of both sexes, or only families.

The shelters that were chosen for the project categories defined above. However, there is in this clientele a wide range of goals, motivation, learning ability, and job skills. The educational program must adapt to these conditions as they exist if it is to be successful.

The Wisconsin application for federal funds stipulated that instructional service in homeless shelters should be provided using the Adult Learning Center model, which has been developed and used successfully in Wisconsin under the Adult Education Act for the past twenty years. The rationale for selecting this model includes:

- It provides maximum opportunity for student in-put in setting personal goals and objectives.
- It is open-entry, open-exit.
- It provides maximum flexibility.

- It allows individualized assessment, counseling and instruction.
- It allows students to proceed at their own rate.
- It is amenable to the use of various technologies, including computer-assisted instruction.
- There is available a professional staff of instructors and program administrators who are experienced in the operation of centers.
- Other services (counseling, career information, etc.) can be made available to individuals as need arises, without disrupting the learning process of others.
- The option of doing group activities exists when and if, in the judgment of the instructor, students will benefit and sufficient numbers are available.

In addition to the advantages which these factors provide, there is a sound pedagogical base for the Wisconsin Learning Center Model. Built on the concept of individualized instruction, five key elements are included: Intake, Assessment, Learning Plan, Interventions, Monitoring and Follow-up. These are outlined in the project application as follows:

Intake

- To develop positive rapport with the student.
- To develop an understanding of the student's educational background and experience.
- To develop an understanding of the student's positive and negative experiences with education.
- To develop an understanding of the student's interest and motivation.

Assessment

- To determine the student's current educational level in the areas of language skills, reading, writing, math and science.
- To develop an understanding of the student's goals.
- To gain more information from which to develop an appropriate learning plan.

Learning Plan

- To identify individual strengths and methods of cultivating those strengths.
- To recognize areas that need development.
- To identify activities which operationalize the student's goals.
- To establish measurements for success.

Interventions

- To develop positive attitudes toward learning and the role of education in one's life.
- To improve the student's academic functioning level.
- To enhance self-esteem.
- To improve employability and self-sufficiency.
- To encourage self-advocacy.
- To increase awareness of opportunities available within the community.

Monitoring and Follow-up

- To provide on-going support to the student.
- To monitor and update the learning plan.
- To involve the student in recruitment and training of new students.

The Wisconsin State Plan developed by the state Vocational, Technical and Adult education staff was approved and the following projects were funded:

Madison - Madison Area Technical College

Program Sites:

The Salvation Army
Tellurian

Drop-In Shelter
Young Women's Christian Association

Services Began on January 17, 1989

1990 Grant Award (15-month funding period): \$118,846

1989 Projected Number to be Served: 100

Actual Number Served: 94*

1990 Projected Number to be Served: 160

Actual Number Served Through 9/30/90: 140

Milwaukee - Milwaukee Area Technical College

Program Sites:

Guest House-Keller Center

Hope House

Services Began on February 1, 1989

1990 Grant Award (15-month funding period): \$102,438

1989 Projected Number to be Served: 275

Actual Number Served: 169*

1990 Projected Number to be Served: 654

Actual Number Served Through 9/30/90: 519

*Count reflects participants who completed 12 or more instructional "contact hours."

Green Bay - Northeast Wisconsin Technical Center

Program Sites:

Room at the Inn

Crossroads

Services Began on July 10, 1990

1990 Grant Award: \$55,820

1990 Projected Number to be Served: 60

Actual Number Served Through 9/30/90: 46

Kenosha - Gateway Technical College

Program Site: Shalom Center

Services Began on September 4, 1990

1990 Grant Award: \$55,820

1990 Projected Number to be Served: 30

Actual Number Served Through 9/30/89: 24

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation centered on four activities: a review of program documentation, site visits to each program, a survey or interview with program participants, and a review of data collected by the four funded programs to comply with federal reporting requirements.

Document Review

Program proposals, site and instructor reports were reviewed to determine if programs were making satisfactory progress toward meeting their goals. The process of developing proposals, program implementation, recordkeeping and related activities have been examined. Through this review, the elements that contribute or hamper in developing a successful program will be identified.

Site Visits

Site visits were made at least once to each program and included interviews with program directors, shelter staff and administrators, instructors, and participants. The interviews were designed to assess the opinions and attitudes of staff and administrators on program delivery, administration and effectiveness. Copies of the interview questions are found in Appendix A. The instructional sites were visited and, when possible, instruction observed.

Survey of Program Participants

A survey was administered to program participants. Two surveys were developed: one for students with less than six hours of instruction, and one for those with more than six hours of instruction. The survey forms were reviewed by program and shelter staff prior to administration, and modifications were made at their request. The surveys were designed to assess participants' opinions of the program, specifically whether they felt they were making academic progress and whether they felt more optimistic about the future than they did prior to enrolling.

The interview questions and participant surveys were based on those included in the California report, "Evaluation of the Adult Homeless Literacy Program," compiled by the Evaluation and Training Institute, Los Angeles, California. Copies of the participant surveys are in Appendix B.

Forty-three individuals (7% of the total population) completed the survey forms: 29 with six or more hours of instruction and 14 with less than six. Completed survey forms were returned from all four programs. Most, if not all, represented students who were active in the program during the evaluation process.

Review of Project Data

Each of the four programs has completed interim reports to the state office, and monitoring reports from the state educational consultant were available. The information contained includes enrollments, number receiving special services such as child care and transportation, and referrals.

REVIEW OF DATA ON PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The data used is taken from periodic reports compiled by project managers. More specific data can be found in the state final report.

Participant Satisfaction

Interviews and surveys both indicate that most of the participants have a very positive feeling about the program, and feel that they are making progress toward their goals.

Progress in Meeting Program Objectives

Number enrolled since October 1, 1989:	613
Projected in state application:	390
Percent of Goal, December 1, 1990:	157%
Number receiving indirect service:	279
Number receiving transportation:	478
Number of families receiving child care:	201
Number referred to and participating in mainstream programs:	83

Sex bias in instructional materials has been eliminated or minimized.

Brochures, flyers, and newspaper articles have been used to establish program presence in the community and to recruit students.

Advisory committees are established, meet regularly, and include a wide variety of local persons who are well able to advise and support programming.

Computers with appropriate software have been purchased and are available in three of the programs. Problems in providing security have delayed purchase in the fourth program.

With one exception, instructors are certified under the WBVTAE guidelines for basic education, and all work under the supervision of professional staff based in the local technical college. (Since the on-site visit to the program, a certified teacher has been hired.)

SITE VISIT FINDINGS

Site visit interviews with program and shelter administrators and instructors assessed their opinions with respect to program effectiveness. The survey for program participants was also discussed with program directors at this time. All programs were satisfied with the surveys as modified. Surveys were distributed and returned to the evaluator. All program sites were not represented, however. The tabulation of the surveys will be presented later in this report.

The information gleaned from these activities can be classified into three main areas: key elements in successful programs, results of the participant surveys, and problems in program implementation.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

Ten key elements of successful programs have been identified. These include the following:

A stable living environment. Successful programs operate in an environment, the homeless shelter, which has provided the participants with basic survival needs, for a specific period of time, prior to their enrollment in the program. Without a secure living arrangement, any involvement in educational programs is difficult, if not impossible.

Cooperation between shelter administration and educational administration and their respective staff. No successful program can exist where there is not total cooperation and clear communication among all parties involved. All aspects of the program that involve agency staff need to be fully and clearly explained, and there needs to be a contact person in the educational institution who is responsible for program operation and who is available to agency managers. Conversely, any constraints that the shelter situation imposes on the instructional activity should be explained to the instructors. In the final analysis, instructional supervision and educational decisions should be the responsibility of the program staff, with the input and involvement of shelter directors.

Advisory committee input. Successful programs use active, involved advisory committees to make available to the program a wide range of community expertise. The committee needs to be involved in program development, implementation and operation.

Individualized instruction. Individualized instruction is used because program participants are adults with widely varying levels of education, experience and career goals. They frequently have had nothing but failure and negative experiences in traditional classrooms. Individualized instruction, including computer-assisted instruction, alleviates the fear of failure, eliminates the element of competition with other class members, and helps give the student a feeling of control and success. Two exceptions to this generalization may be in English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) instruction and in Motivational and Self-Esteem Building activities. ESL is an exception because the content must be taught to everyone, and this population readily accepts traditional classroom instruction. Moreover, one really cannot learn to converse in isolation. Likewise, a significant part of self-esteem is based on one's perception of how others perceive him/her, and learning to communicate with others in a positive way is critical to the development of such perception. The techniques may be learned individually, but it takes a group to practice using them.

Living skills. Effective programs have concentrated on meeting students' immediate living needs while teaching basic skills. A young mother, in one class we observed, was working on a reading lesson which used the care of a sick child as its topic. Other students were using the want ads for their reading assignment. Still others were learning to use a personal computer by inputting information for a resume and printing it out. Not only do such lessons serve to teach basic skills, they provide strong motivation to continue in education as, little by little, students learn that through education they gain control over the problems in their lives.

Adult materials. Adults do not want to, nor will they, study juvenile materials. There is an abundance of adult targeted learning material available. Successful programs use them.

Individualized educational plans. Successful individualized instruction is more than "doing your own thing." It requires setting a goal, planning how to reach it, and determining how you will know when you have reached it. Without such a plan, the student, and probably the instructor, loses sight of the goal, has no measure of progress, and, consequently, has no sense of closure as various goals are reached. This frequently leads to discouragement and dropping classes. If more than one instructor is involved with the student, such a written plan is imperative.

Self-esteem building. Successful basic skills instructors do a great deal of self-esteem building in the course of their contacts with students. However, even more can be accomplished by the systematic use of exercises in personal empowerment and self-esteem. While some of these exercises can be used individually, great benefit can be derived from using a group process.

Network of local services. Beginning with their advisory committees, successful programs have developed a strong network of existing services which coordinate and expand service to the target population. Many shelters provide a wide range of services to their clients. If they do not, however, the instructor may be called on to identify agencies that do provide specific services.

Staff Development/In-service Training. Both pre-service training and intermittent in-service are desirable to provide specific information needed to deal with the target population in a non-traditional environment. Practical solutions to problem-solving can be shared: information about materials that work, how to solve record-keeping problems, and many other topics can be addressed. If practical, teachers from the various programs should be brought together occasionally to exchange information.

SURVEY OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Program participants completed 43 surveys: 29 from participants who had completed more than 6 hours of instruction, and 14 from those who had completed less than 6 hours. This is a 7% sample of the total number of participants. In demographic terms, the following emerges from the participants who completed the survey:

More respondents were male (58.1%) than female (41.9%).

The ages of the respondents:

Under 20 - 14.3%
20 to 30 - 50.0%
30 to 40 - 31.0%
Over 40 - 4.7%

Participants with children: N 25 - 58%

Females - 78%
Males - 44%

All reported receiving help with parenting skills.

Participants with child care problems:

Females - 29%*
Males - 0

*Although this figure represents only 22% of the total population, it clearly demonstrates that young mothers need child care service.

63% are currently looking for work.

86% wish to continue in educational programs.

Several trends are apparent in these results:

Participants with more than six hours of instruction report an increase in basic skills. Since coming to class, 82% reported that they read better; 81% noted that they write better; 88% indicated their math skills had improved; and 96% said they used spoken English better.

All participants reported dramatic change in self-esteem and morale. Regardless of the number of hours in the program, 100% of the participants reported they felt better about life since entering the program.

Regardless of the number of hours in the program, 85% reported they were learning about other educational opportunities available to them and how to access them.

23% of the participants noted that they have found a place to live since beginning the program. Many of these come back to the shelter to continue in the program while in a transitional state.

80% of the participants reported they have learned about other sources of help through the program.

All participants rated the program and instructors positively.

It is not possible for participants with less than six hours of instruction to estimate whether or not they are making academic progress. However, 91% of these participants felt they were learning what they need and that the class was important.

Only one respondent needed assistance to complete the survey because of language problems. It should be noted that at the site where there is a large English-as-a-Second-Language population, shelter staff felt it inappropriate to distribute the survey.

In short, the results of the survey of program participants, reinforced by the interviews with participants at the sites, indicates that, in spite of their situation, they are gaining basic academic skills and showing increased self-esteem. The majority are looking for a job and want to continue in an educational program. Young mothers, in particular, are struggling with child care problems, but still hope and want to continue. The program is doing an excellent job of informing participants about educational opportunities and services available to them.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS

There were three main barriers identified that cause problems in program implementation: personal characteristics and problems of the participants, external barriers, and obstacles inherent to the program. Each is discussed in the section following.

PERSONAL DIFFICULTIES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Low self-esteem and poor motivation. Poorly educated adults usually come into education programs with a negative self-image and low self-esteem which hamper, and in some cases preclude, successful participation in the learning process. Add to this the emotional distress of homelessness, and it becomes obvious that dealing with these emotions must have a high priority. The shelter provides the initial help by providing a secure living situation for a specified period of time, and by assisting the participant in making further arrangements. The instructors must also address these problems by providing self-esteem building exercises, which also help develop motivation.

Failure to assume adult responsibility and poor decision making skills.

Whichever way the causal relationship between these two traits operates, they are frequently found together in the disadvantaged population, and they create problems in program implementation. Students who fail to attend, are frequently tardy, or do not take responsibility for completing assignments, cause disruption in the learning process. Many instructors see only the negative influence of these students, failing to realize that they exhibit symptoms of a learning deficiency, as handicapping as illiteracy, which can be addressed through curriculum and instruction.

Lack of child care assistance. Adult homeless students have excess emotional baggage as well as educational deficiencies. The additional stress of child care for insecure and stressed children taxes program providers to the maximum in providing learning opportunities for single parents. The problem is further compounded by the reluctance of young mothers, particularly those with infants, to leave their children with someone they don't know. Even if child care is available, they frequently insist on bringing the child(ren) with them to class.

EXTERNAL BARRIERS

Inadequate instructional facilities. Most homeless shelters operate under conditions where space is at a premium. Teaching is done between meal service, before cots are set up for the night, or where meetings are being held. Only one program has a dedicated room, meaning that nothing else is going on in the room while the instructor and students are there. While shelter directors have been most cooperative in making these areas as workable as possible, they fall woefully short of adequate. The instructors and students, however, cheerfully cope with the most trying conditions.

Lack of child care assistance. The problems caused by lack of child care are not only intrinsic to the parent, but they are also an external barrier. Most of the homeless mothers qualify for child care assistance under the Aid to Families With Dependent Children programs in Wisconsin. In reality, by the time the paperwork is processed and child care authorized, the parent is usually out of the program.

Jobs and job training. Many of the homeless are employed, regularly or periodically, in part-time, minimum wage jobs that do not cover the cost of housing, food and other living expenses. Many employers and job training programs are reluctant to place the homeless because they are stereotyped as transient and unreliable. Training programs are available in Wisconsin through the Department of Social Services for families with dependent children, and efforts should be made to inform participants about this opportunity.

Young single people find it difficult, if not impossible, to get support during training.

Shortage of shelter bed space. Many of the shelters regularly turn people away after their beds are filled. Few, if any, programs have the capacity to recruit those who are not fortunate enough to get into a shelter.

OBSTACLES INHERENT TO THE PROGRAM

Federal funding process. This is a cumbersome, slow-moving process, with many time-consuming paperwork demands at all levels of the program. It is also widely regarded as highly unstable funding, so local program operators are usually forced to use call staff, many of whom are dedicated, capable instructors, but who are unable to provide the continuity of programming which contract instructors bring to a program.

Limited availability of instruction. Most instructors hold class once or twice a week in more than one location. Within the constraints of the shelter demands on space, a more frequent meeting schedule might help alleviate the child care problem by providing an opportunity for mothers to exchange child care without giving up so high a percentage of their own time for instruction.

Curriculum. The model used in the development of this program was taken from the Adult Education program, which is designed to focus on basic skill development. While that remains an important part of the program, it needs to be modified to meet the specific needs of the homeless adult for living skills and building self-esteem instruction.

Lack of direct supervision and involvement by the technical colleges. This problem existed in only one program, but it is significant enough to warrant mention. Shelter staff and instructors complained that the local technical college was not providing technical assistance in any of the program activities, and there appeared to be extreme communication problems between the institution and the shelters. During the time between the first and last on-site visits, steps had been taken to rectify this situation. A new staff person has been assigned to assume project supervision, and positive steps have been taken to address the problems, many of which have been resolved. It is essential that such direction be provided by the technical colleges.

The characteristics of the target population. Many federal programs designed to help the disadvantaged have been accused of "creaming" to get fast results. The homeless adult population, even though exceptions can be found, has a dis-proportionally high percentage of persons who share minimal education, lack of job and living skills, a poor self-image and low self-esteem. In addition, their living and financial situation has put them at a high stress level. At best, with life needs temporarily provided by the shelter, they are in a transitional state. All of these factors make this an extremely difficult population with which to work.

It should be noted that shelter directors place known substance abusers in treatment rather than educational programs. If, however, they do find their way into programs, they are rarely successful. Staff should make every effort to refer suspected abusers to agencies that can help them get treatment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Providing adult education for the homeless in shelters is a new program concept. Most of the effort has concentrated on developing program proposals, implementation plans, and curriculum, purchasing materials and equipment, and hiring staff. Wisconsin, however, has been able to establish programming which shows positive trends through the following activities:

- provided a forum for shelter operators, community leaders and educators to discuss the educational needs of the homeless and to develop strategies to meet these needs;
- improved the reported self-esteem of the participants;
- encouraged participants to consider enrolling in school or a job training program as a viable life option; and
- improved the self-reported literacy skills of homeless adults.

The homeless adult literacy program neither replaces nor competes with established programs. It has reached adults out of the mainstream and brought them into an educational program. As the program continues to serve the homeless, it is reasonable to expect that all will be as successful as the first in establishing the linkages to existing programs that will enable the participants to continue to build their basic academic skills, job and living skills, and self-esteem.

Each shelter is unique, with programming designed to meet the needs of its target population: single men and/or women, families with children, single mothers and children, or non-English speaking adults/families. There is, therefore, no homogeneous group of shelters or homogeneous homeless population for whom "A Program" can be developed.

Each educational program must adapt its curriculum and instruction to the needs of the population served by each shelter.

The original proposals, lacking an experience base with the homeless, drew heavily on the Adult Education models. Much of what was developed is in place and working effectively. New proposals, however, should develop goals and objectives which more clearly reflect the reality of the homeless program.

On the basis of this evaluation and these conclusions, the following recommendations are offered to the State Department:

- The four funded programs in Wisconsin show evidence of careful planning in the development and implementation stages. They are making good progress in meeting their objectives, and mechanisms are in place to address problems which arise. The state department needs to continue to provide leadership in the following areas:
 - Provide leadership in curriculum development, including living skills and motivational/self-esteem building.
 - Provide leadership in staff development and in-service.
 - Provide a vehicle for sharing information among the program providers.
 - Provide local programs with uniform data collection and report forms, and instruct local staff in their use.
 - Require and facilitate the active participation of the project managers of the technical college.
 - Require WBVTAE Basic Education certification for all instructors and fund programs at the level which permits local managers to use these instructional hours as part of the work load of experienced teachers.

The following recommendations are proposed for local staff:

- Continue to work with shelter administrators to promote awareness of the program and recruit students into the program. Given the highly mobile state of this population, this activity must always remain a priority effort.
- Continue efforts to inform participants about other educational programs and services, and make referrals for service when appropriate.
- Provide instructional materials which use living skill content while developing basic skills.
- Continue to rely on shelter staff to screen the population in the shelter, and refer only those most likely to benefit from the program.

- Provide paraprofessional assistance to assist with tutoring, record keeping and data collection.
- Provide a forum for the community to discuss how child care services can be provided to program participants. Child care providers, social services, the local state employment office, shelter staff, the technical college staff, volunteer groups and any other interested persons should be included.
- Integrate program staff as much as possible into the existing adult education staff so that their expertise and experience are available to assist them.

APPENDIX A: Preliminary Survey/Interview Form

Site Visit Interview Questions Project Director

1. How long have you been involved with this shelter and this project? What other past experience do you have in working with the homeless or in literacy programs?
2. How would you describe the population you are serving at the shelter through this program? What special challenges do they present?
3. How do you outreach to potential participants? Are there certain techniques that have proven particularly successful? Have you encountered any problems in conducting outreach and getting participants into the program?
4. How do you coordinate the program with: 1) local CBOs; 2) local Adult Education programs; 3) non-profit literacy groups; 4) VISTA; and 5) Employment/Training Programs? What coordination activities have proven to be particularly successful?
5. Have you encountered any problems in coordinating the program with outside agencies/organizations, or with other departments in your own institution? What action has been taken to resolve these problems and what has been the outcome?
6. How do you structure your curriculum? What types of instructional activities/subject matters have proven most successful? What has been least successful?
7. What instructional materials are you utilizing? Which materials have proven most and least successful? Why? Are program participants provided personal copies of these materials to keep?
8. Who provides the instruction? What is the background of the instructor(s)? How effective do you perceive the instructor(s) to have been? What factors contribute to instructor effectiveness?
9. Have you evaluated the instructional program or the instructors? If yes, what were the outcomes of the evaluation? What changes were made as a result?

10. What in-service training related to basic skills and literacy have your instructors attended (include SDE funded training)? What changes were made as a result? How effective do you think this training is?
11. Do you utilize volunteers in the program (includes other shelter residents and outside volunteer)? Who are the volunteers and how are they utilized? How are they recruited? How effective have you found them to be in working with the participants? What do you think makes them effective/ineffective?
12. Have you encountered any problems in recruiting or working with volunteers? What action has been taken to resolve these problems and what has been the outcome?
13. On average, how long do participants remain in the program? How do you encourage continued participation? What strategies/incentives have proven effective in promoting continued participation?
14. Are study/support groups a part of your program? How effective have you found them to be?
15. How do you provide child care for the program participants? How effective have these arrangements proven to be?
16. What problems, if any, have you encountered in keeping participants in the program? What action has been taken to resolve these problems and what has been the outcome?
17. Other than those we have already discussed, have you encountered any problems in implementing or operating this program?
18. How would you evaluate the level of support for this program in the shelter and in the community? In particular, how would you evaluate the level of support from the shelter's administration?
19. How would you evaluate the support and assistance which has been given you by the State Office? Do you think there are any other ways they could better assist you in operating the program?
20. Are there any other ways in which you think the program could be improved?

Site Interview Questions (Continued)

Homeless Evaluation

Program Instructor

1. How long have you been involved with this program and the homeless? What is your background in basic skills instruction?
2. What in-service training have you participated in related to literacy and the homeless? How useful has this training been?
3. How do you structure your curriculum? How do you use the curriculum to develop individualized instructional plans? What types of instructional activities/subject matters have proven most successful? What has been least successful?
4. What instructional materials are you utilizing? Which materials have proven most and least successful? Why? Are program participants provided personal copies of these materials to keep?
5. Have you evaluated the instructional program, materials, and methods? If yes, what were the outcomes of the evaluation? What changes were made as a result?
6. Do you use volunteers in the program (shelter residents and outside volunteers)? Who are the volunteers and how are they utilized? How are they recruited? How effective have you found them to be in working with the participants? What do you think makes them effective/ineffective?
7. On the average, how long do participants remain in the program? How do you encourage continued participation? What strategies/incentives have proven effective in promoting continued participation?
8. Are study/support groups part of your program? How effective have you found them to be?
9. If counseling or other support services are a part of program, how effective and available to the clients do you perceive them to be? Are institutional counseling and support services available to the program participants? How do you rate inter-departmental cooperation with this program?
10. What problems, if any, have you encountered in keeping participants in the program? What action has been taken to resolve these problems and what has been the outcome?

11. Other than those we've discussed, have you encountered any problems in providing instruction?
12. How would you evaluate the support and assistance which has been given you by the State Office? Do you think there are any other ways they could better assist you in operating the program?
13. Are there ways in which the program could be improved?

Site Interview Questions (Continued)
Homeless Evaluation
Shelter Administration

1. How would you describe the population you are serving at the shelter through this program? What special challenges do they present?
2. How is the program coordinated with: 1) local CBOs; 2) Adult Education; 3) non-profit literacy groups; 4) VISTA; and 5) Employment and Training Programs? What coordination activities have proven to be particularly successful? Why do you think these activities have been successful?
3. Have you encountered any problems in coordinating the program with outside agencies/organizations? What action has been taken to resolve these problems and what has been the outcome?
4. Does the shelter have an advisory board for this program? Who sits on the board? What do you think the board has contributed to the program?
5. How would you evaluate the level of support for this program in the shelter and in the community?
6. Overall, how effective do you think this program has been? What elements have contributed to its success?
7. Have you encountered any problems in administering or operating the program? What action has been taken to resolve these problems and what has been the outcome?
8. How would you evaluate the support and assistance which has been given you by the State Office? Do you think there are other way they could better assist you in operating the program?
9. Are there any other ways in which you think the program could be improved?

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT SURVEYS

PARTICIPANT SURVEY - 6 or more hours of instruction. We want to find out if you like your classes and if they are helping you. Please help us by answering the following questions. **WRITE IN OR CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER.**

Since you started coming to class:

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|----|
| 1. | Do you think your reading has improved? | YES | NO |
| 2. | Are you writing better? | YES | NO |
| 3. | Are your math skills better? | YES | NO |
| 4. | Do you read the newspapers? | YES | NO |
| 5. | Do you feel better about life? | YES | NO |
| 6. | Can you use spoken English better? | YES | NO |
| 7. | Have you learned about other places beside the shelter where you can go for help? | YES | NO |
| 8. | Have you received help with parenting? | YES | NO |
| 9. | Have you found a place to live? | YES | NO |

Other questions:

- | | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|------|------|
| 10. | What do you feel about the way your teacher works with you? | BAD | FAIR | GOOD |
| 11. | Do you think your teacher is doing a good job? | YES | NO | |
| 12. | Have you found it hard to come to class because of your children? | YES | NO | |
| 13. | Are you learning about other educational opportunities in this area? | YES | NO | |
| 14. | Will you continue with school? | YES | NO | |
| 15. | Are you looking for a job now? | YES | NO | |

About you:

How old are you? Are you: Male Female

Do you have children? If yes, how many?

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROGRAM STAFF:

Did the respondent require assistance to complete
this questionnaire?

YES NO

Was it done in student's first language?

YES NO

Was it done orally?

YES NO

If YES, circle reason:

Literacy

English

Personality

PARTICIPANT SURVEY - Less than 6 hours of instruction

We want to find out if you like your classes and if they are helping you. Please help us by answering the following questions. **WRITE IN OR CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER.**

About the class:

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------|
| 1. | How do you feel about the way your teacher works with you? | BAD FAIR GOOD |
| 2. | How do you feel about coming to class? | BAD FAIR GOOD |
| 3. | Do you think you are learning what you need? | YES NO |
| 4. | Do you think the class is important? | YES NO |
| 5. | Does coming to the class make you feel better? | YES NO |
| 6. | Have you found it hard to come to class because of your children? | YES NO |

About the future:

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| 8. | Are you looking for a job now? | YES NO |
| 9. | Are you learning about other educational opportunities in this area? | YES NO |
| 10. | Do you think you will keep on in school? | YES NO |
| 11. | Do you know how to apply for financial assistance to go to school? | YES NO |

About you:

How old are you? Are You: Male Female

Do you have any children? If yes, how many?

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROGRAM STAFF:

Did the respondent require assistance to complete
this questionnaire?

YES NO

Was it done in the student's first language?

YES NO

Was it administered orally?

YES NO

If YES, circle reason:

Literacy

English

Personality